

Interview #16

Location: Barnegat Light, New Jersey

Date: 2/01/06

INTERVIEW:

RES: We start off with some background questions and try and get a better handle on who you are. The first is how old are you?

I: 41

RES: You were born in what is that?

I: 64

RES: Where were you born?

I: Forked River right across the bay here.

RES: Do you come from a fishing family?

I: Well my father had a charter boat.

RES: Was that, did he get in to tile as opposed to just that?

I: No, he did it a few times, but just stuck with the charter fishing. In fact he's still got the same charter boat, still does it.

RES: Still fishing out of Barnegat Light?

I: Yea, right over here.

RES: What about education, how much were you able to get?

I: High school

RES: Are you married?

I: Yes

RES: Do you have any kids? One of the reasons we ask about kids is we're interested in the next generation, whether or not you're encouraging, if they're old enough, I don't know, your children to get in to fishing, or?

I: I have two girls; the youngest is a boy; he's only six and a half.

RES: So not an issue yet.

I: No interest yet.

RES: What do you think in about another ten years will you encourage them to get in?

I: Probably, I wouldn't force him, but if that's what he wants to do.

RES: You're not against it, or for it, it's up to him?

I: Yea, I mean I'd like to see him do it.

RES: When I ask guys up in Newfoundland the same question, I think we asked 34 of them and 30 said no.

I: Well it seems like regulations is helping the fishery around here; seems like there's more fish to catch, if they'd just let us catch more. I think the regulations and everything are helping, as far as the amount of fish and what you're allowed to catch. Being able to catch, just wish they'd let us catch more. Conservation is helping.

RES: It's increasing the number of fish out there. You just think you should be able to catch more.

I: Right now we're tile fishing. Plenty of tile fish but we've got a small quota. Once it's caught up we're done.

RES: You're primarily long liner; pelagic long lining and bottom long lining?

I: So far, yea; but I think as soon as our tile fish is done I'm going to rig it up to go scalloping.

RES: You have just a gen cat license in scalloping?

I: Yea, I got a gen cat. But I got landings before the control date so I should get a, you know they got a control date; whenever they do something they're going to go back to the control date, so I got landings before that. I own my other boat and I'll put the permit on here and still be able to do it.

RES: What's your current status? Are you the owner/operator of this?

I: I'm owner; I've got a hired captain.

RES: This is the XXXX?

I: XXXX

RES: What's the other vessel?

I: XXXX

RES: Is that also a long- liner?

I: That's a scallop boat, general category scallop boat.

RES: How long is this one?

I: 63 I think.

RES: How long is the XXXX?

I: 58

RES: Are you the operator of that one?

I: No, I've got a captain too; part time operator but I've got a hired captain too.

RES: For the most part you have full control []

I: Ideally yea

RES: Ideally, it doesn't work out that way all the time?

I; No

RES: How long have you been doing this?

I: I started baiting for my father when I was ten or eleven; and then commercial fish right out of high school. Commercial fished a couple of summers there and then when I got out of high school I began doing it full time.

RES: On your own?

I: No working for people. Starting out working for people and I bought my one boat in 92.

RES: So by 92 you were owner and operator?

I: Owner/operator for about eight or nine years.

RES: Okay, so then you've been owner since about 2000?

I: Strictly owner? Yea, pretty much.

RES: When did you buy the second vessel?

I: 2000, 99; something like that. Every boat I bought I basically like redid them, bought them cheap and redid them.

RES: Did you do the work yourself?

I: Yea I did the work myself. I redid this boat, took me nine or ten months. The first boat I bought I spent a year redoing it.

RES: So that would have been, you started on your own around 77 or 78 is that right, early 80's when you got your own vessel?

I: No I got my own vessel in 92. I started commercial fishing right out of high school in 83.

RES: When you got the one in 92 what did you get?

I: It was a vessel, still sitting over there. It's a 55 foot wooden long-liner. I rigged it out, went long-lining and then I rigged it up to go gill netting monk fish. But I basically rebuilt that whole thing before I started fishing with it.

RES: So when you began what fisheries were you engaged in?

I: A little bit of tile fish. I tiled fished

RES: Bottom long-lining.

I: Yea, ran a tile boat and worked on one and then I bought my own, did a little bit of tile and then I started long-lining sharks and they shut that down and then long-lined tuna fish and then got in to gill netting.

RES: When you started in 83?

I: Long-line; strictly bottom long-lining for tile fish

RES: No pelagic long-lining?

I: A little bit.

RES: How much of a season can you get on tile fish?

I: It was year round back then.

RES: Then what happened?

I: Back in the late 80's tile fishing got real bad.

RES: What do you mean got bad?

I: Couldn't catch enough of them, was over fished I guess. I always wanted to try gill netting so I got a job on a gill net boat, a day boat; spent the winters working in a boat yard.

RES: And you were multi season gill netting anyway?

I: That was just along the beach here; blue fish, weak fish.

RES: In shore?

I: Yea, did that for many years and then boat my own boat; got tired of working for people.

RES: When you boat your own boat what did you do?

I: Long-lined.

RES: Went back to tile fish only?

I: Yea, just for a couple of months and then I did some tuna and sword fish and then I shark fished; then they put a season on it and limited access.

RES: For shark?

I: Yea, there wasn't any money in it. Then I rigged up to go gill netting dog fish.

RES: Then what happened?

I: Just basically gill netted nine months a year, then long-lined a couple months a year up until

RES: When you mean long-lining you mean tile?

I: No, just tuna and sword; up until 98, 99 or 2000. Then I got a second boat, a 44 foot fiber glass boat and rigged that up for this general category scalloping.

RES: Was that starting to get good back that early?

I: Well I was like the first guy to rig up to do here in town. It was good for the big boats, but you can't catch scallops with a little boat and a little dredge. So I figured well I'll take this little boat and rig that up and try it.

RES: 400 pounds a day often was available then?

I: Yea and it seemed to work out all right so I sold that boat, 2 ½ years ago and got this steel boat that I got now; just so I could be; instead of towing one little drag I could tow two now.

RES: That was primarily to pursue the?

I: General scallop.

RES: What happens if that goes away? I mean, how about if the scallops go down or the price goes down or the gen cat?

I: I got a monk permit I can throw on there and go monk fishing. I got multi species days on there, I don't know, I probably would try dragging or I don't know.

RES: But you'd hand on to the vessel?

I: Probably, yea, I don't know what else I would do. Try to hang to it.

RES: When you got started was it difficult to get started in fishing?

I: Sure.

RES: How do you mean?

I: The biggest problem is that, I think, is getting these other guys to respect your

RES: You're talking about when you got started?

I: Yea, like they hate to see a new guy get started. Not that I was new, I worked around here but

RES: They think you're green, that you don't know anything?

I: No, I don't know, it means more competition for them.

RES: So they got a good thing going and they don't want to see anybody else horning in.

I: Yea, if anybody else gets in to it well now there's going to be more people catching the same product, the price will go down. Plus and then it takes money to make money, and if you don't have the money, you gotta make some money doing what you're doing so you can try another fishery.

RES: Was the government more supportive back then? I mean I hear about all these programs in the 70's and 80's that?

I: No, I didn't get in to that.

RES: You did it on your own or through the bank or something?

I: Yea, through the bank and did all the work myself to save money. I could either pay someone to get it done real quick and then go fish or I could take more time and do it all myself; not as much overhead.

RES: Did you have any formal training in fishing?

I: No

RES: What about engines or repair?

I: On the job training. I bought this steel boat here and learned how to weld. Before that my father always did a lot of woodwork and I learned how to do that. I worked in the boat yard. I worked in a lot of wood work and fiberglass. Just learn as you go. Learned all the wiring myself and hydraulics and basically other, rebuild the engine, I can pretty much; I can't rebuild it but, simple stuff I can fix.

RES: You never had to take a diesel class?

I: No. Just watch, watch and learn and listen.

RES: We're asking questions about community and how people socialize together at the beginning of your career and at the end. You mentioned it was kind of difficult in some ways to get in to fishing. Did fishermen hang out together? Were they tight bunch, would you call them a group?

I: Yea, they're pretty tight; I mean the Barnegat Light area. No matter what you do everybody knows about it. I don't live here. I live on the main land but always fished out of here.

RES: Did you used to live here?

I: No, never did. What was the question again?

RES: Did fishermen socialize together? Did they hang out together?

I: Yea, pretty much.

RES: What does that mean? Did people go to see each others kids play ball? Did they go to the bar together?

I: I don't hang. These people here in town do, but I live on the main land so I don't hang out with any of them. I get done at work and I go home. I talk to them a little but our

families don't hang out together. I think the main reason is cause I live on the main land and they all live over here.

RES: Has that changed over, I mean not for you, but do you get the sense that the community has changed in any way over time in that sense; that you were tighter then than now, or is it tighter now than then?

I: I don't know. All I know is that the price of real estate is so high on the island a lot of the guys that grew up here are moving to the mainland.

RES: I heard that from a couple of folks.

I: Cause they're getting top dollar for the house here and they can move to the mainland.

RES: Buy a bigger house, save some money, put money in the bank.

I: Yup.

RES: What about politically? Were fishermen organized in any way when you started out?

I: No, didn't seem like it. We're trying to get organized now cause

RES: Whose we, you mean Barnegat Light or?

I: Like the dock is; the dock contributes for these organizations. Like we got two organizations, a certain percentage, when you pack out, comes out, for the organization at this dock.

RES: And the organization, you mean the dock or?

I: Well there is Garden State Seafood Association. We're all a member, but the dock collects our money and then they send it in for us and they match it.

RES: Yea, I've been talking with XXXX quite a bit.

I: And there's a Blue Water Fishermen's Association for long-liners.

RES: Are you a member of that?

I: Yea, I used to be a member, but I'm not making any money long-lining so I'm just kind of giving it up.

RES: So, that's why you're shifting to scalloping, or its [] to rig for long-lining?

I: Yea, it is, but I'm leaning that way.

RES: Why?

I: Because there's no money in tuna. I had a guy running a boat; I boat the boat, fixed it up and had this guy run it for two and a half, three years, and we just couldn't make any money. Get three dollars a pound for your fish and it costs you two dollars a pound to go catch them.

RES: So is that a market problem?

I: Yea, they were getting more money for the tuna and sword back in the late 80's.

RES: Why?

I: I think because they import too many.

RES: Back then you were competing with the Japanese.

I: The third world countries, if they don't pay their crew nothing. Back in the late 80's they didn't import any sword and tuna so the price was up. Now they import them. Soon as the price gets up a little they import them and you just can't compete.

RES: Global market

I: And they develop, these other countries, the price got so high here they developed these other, like Export, Inc., he helped develop all these other countries, get the ball rolling and now he just imports them. Take the shrimp in the gulf; the farm raised shrimp are killing them.

RES: Can't compete economically.

I: And it cost you, to go long-line; tuna fish or sword fish, it's twenty grand a trip, for expense. Well, if you don't catch

RES: Fuel, crew

I: Basics; fuel, bait, ice, groceries, tackle. It's like everybody is making money, except for the boat owner.

RES: What about the regulations and all that? Do you think that's a factor or mostly it's just an economic question?

I: As far as the tuna, sword fish, I think it's economic. It seems like there's a lot of fish to catch, you know you can't go out and catch them all the time. You might have one bad trip; you're in the hole and one more per year and you're

RES: Back when you started you began with tile fish in the winter; that's pretty much a winter fishery -year round I mean; and now you've moved to fish in the winter?

I: That was 83 when I got out of high school. I did that for four years straight.

RES: Then what, do you remember the first regulations that started to come on to the fishery at that point, or how regulations began to affect you; if at all?

I: The first regulation that affected us was we were gill netting dog fish and they shut it down.

RES: Do you remember what year that was?

I: 2000, 2001 maybe. Then they were over fished. Then we started gill netting monk fish and that was good for a couple of years and then they regulated that; trip limit days at sea.

RES: But prior to 2000, regulations while they were there, didn't affect you in a major way?

I: No, there was no quotas or seasons; just go fishing.

RES: And for all the species that you mentioned, some of the in shore ones

I: As far as what we did.

RES: Which was tile fish

I: dog fish, monk fish,

RES: Did you catch weaks and fluke?

I: Yea, actually they, I guess all these regulations happened in the late 90's; seemed like it.

RES: What happened when they shut the dog fish fishing, what happened to you?

I: I went monk fishing; gill net monk fishing.

RES: Had you rigged out with all the dog nets and everything?

I: Yea, had it all ready to go and then the dog fish would show up early in the fall, we'd do that and then we'd go monking November and December. Then the opposite in spring and then they did away with the dog fish and we had to go strictly monk fishing.

RES: Did that hurt?

I: Sure it hurt. Like right now we could be doing good dog fishing but we're not allowed to catch them.

RES: What percentage of your income at that time would you say that was, was it half, a quarter, most?

I: Depends on what year.

RES: Well a ball park.

I: Probably a third to a half.

RES: What do you think about the closure then, was that an appropriate management measure or was that off target, or?

I: For the dog fish? Well now I here complaints that there's so many out there.

RES: I'm hearing that too.

I: They should give us a little bit of a season. Give us some poundage to catch, you know we're allowed 300 pounds a day, which we're getting as high as a quarter a pound, so

RES: Are you allowed to directly catch them, or is it?

I: Well we were, but now we go directly catch 300 pounds and that's it, which doesn't even, every boat in town would have to land a 300 even to make it worth while to send a truck down here to pick them up. The monk fish is regular, now we're down to 40 days a year.

RES: Is that cutting in to your profit?

I: Sure, oh yea. Couple years there monk fish was probably 90% of my profit.

RES: What years was that?

I: 97, 98, 99. Up until they put the days at sea in and the trip limit. I forget what year it was.

RES: That's before you got in to scallops.

I: Yea, and the reason I got in to scallops is the limited days of monk fishing; needed something else to do. A lot of these monk boats will gill net along the beach in the spring, summer and early fall until it's ready to go monk fishing; I didn't want to do that. I had already done it and I didn't particularly care for it.

RES: The in shore gill netting?

I: Yea

RES: What didn't you like about that?

I: Just didn't get any money for our fish and it was just a different type of fishery that

RES: Was it the actual work you didn't like, or?

I: No it wasn't the work. Like the one type of fishery it was very monotonous, I was very bored at it; really didn't make a lot of money. It was a seven day a week job, every day; if there was a day you didn't go it was the day you caught a lot of fish and got a lot of money so you had to go every day. Where as scalloping we'd go catch our 400 pounds, basically you'd know what you're going to make every day. They're always out there.

RES: Relatively easy to catch them?

I: Relatively. You know they're out there, just stay until you catch your 400 pounds, whether it takes 10 hours, 20 hours or 30 hours; unless you break down you're never going to have a bad day. There's always a day's pay.

RES: So how many days a week are you going for scallops?

I: As many as we can right now which is only about three or four cause of the weather. In the summer time we try to do five days a week.

RES: That's a fair amount of time away from home none the less.

I: Yea, but at least you get a couple of days off. Okay, I'm going to take the weekend off; gill netting was every day. Then I got married and had kids and I didn't want to spend that much time out fishing. Now I'd rather work on them, maintain them and let some one else go fishing.

RES: What about your profitability over time? We don't need numbers but, had your profit margin stayed roughly the same over your career, or have they gone up, or have they gone down?

I: It went up, then like 2000 it went down, and now it's pretty much steady.

RES: What explains that up, you say it went up until about 2000?

I: Well cause of the monk fish. The monk fishing was real good, then it went down until we got; the scalloping when we first started we were getting less than half the money than

we get now. Now the price of scallops is up so we're doing better.

RES: So it was the closure of monk and dog that hurt your profitability but then scallops now started to fill that.

I: But now we're going to get regulated on that. We can go every day now if we went scalloping but I don't know what it's going to be when we get limited to days on that too.

RES: Do you think that's a good thing, I mean for you?

I: I think it's a good thing but they can't give us 40 days a year.

RES: Is that what they're talking about?

I: I don't know what they're talking about but I keep hearing 30, 40, 50 days.

RES: Down from unlimited?

I: Yea. I don't think it can be unlimited cause there is more and more boats every day getting in to the fishery and it can only handle so much. We definitely need some regulating but you can't go from one extreme to the other.

RES: What would it cost to get started from scratch in the general category scallop boat; if I wanted to buy one what would it cost?

I: Well, it depends. You can go scalloping with a 40 foot boat if you want; tow one little eight foot drag; or I got two eleven footers on there.

RES: Which one are you pointing at there?

I: You can't see it here. Two over from the XXXX there.

RES: Is it XXX?

I: Yea, it has like a XXX. That needs a lot of work too, I got to get that hull out and paint it. I bought it, rigged it up for scallops and it just, tried to pick away as I make money, do what I have to do. Had some problems on that; blew up an engine, blew up a couple transmissions; just trying to get back on my feet.

RES: There used to be quite a few more pelagic long-liners here, now

I: That's all this was, this town

RES: And gill netters as well?

I: Gill netters and pelagic long-liners. It started out tile bottom long-liners; then they got into pelagic long-lining, from middle 80's to middle 90's. There was a couple scallop

boats in town the rest were pelagic long-liners.

RES: And now?

I: All scallops. 90% of boats in town are scallops.

RES: And a couple of gill netters; not many, but

I: No there ain't many. There's none at the other dock; right now there's six or eight here and that's it.

RES: Do you think regulations play in to that, or is that an economic question again?

I: That's an economic question.

RES: Scallops are worth so many dollars a pound and

I: Yea, you can catch blue fish; they're twenty five cents a pound; that's what they were getting back in 1980. The price goes up but as soon as you catch a few it goes down. If it's rough and everybody stays in and you're the only guy that goes out caught some blue fish you can usually get good money for them. But the scallops are just so consistent.

RES: What happens if they drop it down to 40 days at sea, or whatever it is, some radical drop; what's going to happen to all these people that are scalloping?

I: I don't know. I'll go scalloping 40 days and go monk fishing for 40 days; buy another monk permit if I had to, put it on the other boat.

RES: What would a monk permit cost you?

I: They're going for 50, 60 grand. All the permits seem to be.

RES: How do the guys finance it? Is this something you can get a bank loan or do you have to that by cash?

I: I guess you've got to come up with cash, an equity loan on your house, or something. These full time scallop boats, the boats are worth three, four, five hundred thousand; the permit is worth; half a millions or a million.

RES: What does that do to young people? What if you're twenty years old, you're eighteen like when you started, how do you, can they get in?

I: I worked for ten years on a boat to save enough money to buy some old wooden boat and I spent a year fixing it up; that's how I got in to it. I had no help. I don't know. The problem is you spend a million and a half, well if everything stays the way its been the last couple of years you can pay for it but what happens if they regulate it? He's

threatening to take their days away. They're counting every single day I go fishing.

RES: You're talking about full time?

I: Yea, you spend a million and a half dollars for a full time scallop boat and permit and all of sudden you're down to 50 days a year.

RES: It's terrible.

I: Yea, you know ten years ago you couldn't give one of them boats away, no one wanted one cause they weren't catching any scallops. Now look at it. You couldn't buy one if you wanted one.

RES: Do you think the people that were in it at that time are they just lucky; that they have these licenses, or do they think that, I mean should they have those licenses or what?

I: Sure they should, they've been doing it all these years. They stuck through the hard times. It just, luckily the scalloping they regulated it, they closed areas and the scalloping got better.

RES: Do you think the closed areas are one of the reasons it got good?

I: Closed areas, we got bigger (?rings #200) so we let the little ones get bigger and they got limited to days and they're fishing half the days and making twice the money on it than they used to. They fish in all kinds of weather now, because when do they come in. Fish only got so many days here to go fishing. I'm hoping all these other fisheries go in that direction.

RES: What direction?

I: You fish half the time, make twice as much money.

RES: But that would require limited entries, that requires

I: Yea, but that's sort of for the guy who wants to get started.

RES: That's one of the concerns people have with limited entry?

I: It's good for me as a boat owner, but [] for you guys. I mean there's a captain running the boat and one day you want to get your own boat, how would you ever afford that. I don't think the bank would loan you the money for a piece of paper to get a permit.

RES: What about the resource, do you think it's good for the resource, sounds like you do for scallops?

I: Sure, like I said you got, technology is so good, we're so efficient, definitely have to

regulate it; you can't have a free for all. All them shrimp, all them boats from the Gulf and shrimp boats are coming up here going general category fishing. They've got nothing else to do.

RES: Take the boat you go long-lining now and you put it side by side with the boat you started on long-lining; how much more would you catch with this boat; same time, same place, same everything, except for the boats you use; how much more efficient is this boat?

I: This boat is more efficient, fishing in better weather, holds more fish where a couple of good days of fish and the other boat is full and I got to come in; whereas with this you can stay out.

RES: Do you think it's twice as effective, or half?

I: Half again as much.

RES: I mean it's hard to compare it's been twenty years

I: Well, you're more cost effective cause you come in with more fish. It basically costs you the same to go whether it's for five days or ten days.

RES: What about the electronics, I mean you have a pretty good display of the electronics?

I: What do you mean about electronics?

RES: Well how much of a role do they play in improving your ability to catch fish?

I: Big role. Like right now we've got these plotters and years ago you didn't have no plotter at all. Look at your numbers and how you're towing; now we've got these plotters that shows you the fathom curves and everything, draws a line where ever you're going, if you caught them you can go right back where you where.

RES: I saw, I was at the marine show, St. John's actually showing us something they're coming out now, unbelievable!

I: Right now they have machines that will map the bottom.

RES: Yea that's what I saw and then they have this deal, I don't know if they're actually selling them yet, or if they're just having a display on it, but the thing that maps the bottom which integrated with your plotters; you knew where you were on the surface and then you could join this service where you pay I think 20 bucks a month and you sent in your data and it went in to a big central data base and then you had access to that central data base. You've got every body else's plot. The industry ends up with better maps.

I: Well like the long-lining, now they've got the satellite picking long-lines up for the water; the hot water, the cold water. We have it on here. Every day you get an updated picture, shows you the current speed, the direction and the surface temperature and the anomalies and that definitely helps you fish.

RES: Lethal

I: Well now instead of sitting at home until you find something you can pretty much go where you have a pretty good idea where you're going to catch something. You're not wasting.

RES: Who does that service, the temperature thing?

I: No, it's private; there's a couple of different outfits.

RES: You got to pay for that?

I: Sure, it's expensive.

RES: But worth it.

I: Well, I thought it was, but come to find out; it was worth it, if would have been worth it for a big boat that spends a lot of time fishing.

RES: But at your level?

I: Well we can get all our information for free on land; over the internet. Course that means the guy who runs the boat says you have to have it. It definitely helps though.

RES: Has the gear that you've used changed over time in long-lining; like do you use an automatic baiter now or anything like that?

I: No, not for surface long-line. For bottom long-line I'd love to have one.

RES: But you don't

I: What we're doing is labor intensive; the snap on gear, bait the hooks you've got to snap them all; you've got to unsnap them. We're not allowed to do it, gear to make it worth while.

RES: What do you mean we're not allowed?

I: Like the tile fishing out of the small quota, once you're caught up you're done. Get a couple of trips a year out of it and then you're done. You can't afford to invest all that money for an automated long-line system to go a couple of times a year.

RES: Do you think that the regulation on that wasn't there you said you're thinking of phasing out of long-lining, would you go back to it do you think, if that regulation wasn't?

I: Bottom long-line.

RES: Okay, so that's a separate deal for you than pelagic?

I: Surface long-line unless the average price of fish comes up

RES: Not worth it?

I: No, cause the price of gear, everything went up except the price of fish; insurance, bait, tackle. We're paying 80 cents a pound for bait.

RES: So you do, in contrast to surface long-line, you do see yourself staying in bottom long-lining for at least a little while.

I: Yea, cause it's not as much overhead, there's not as much expense to go do it.

RES: Cause you're not traveling as far?

I: Yea, yea.

RES: Plus it's []

I: Well tuna fishing, it was, the bait and the tackle was the biggest expense. The bottom long-lines, like they've been cutting up the dog fish and using them for bait. I haven't bought bait for three trips now, so that's the biggest savings. With tuna fish you have to have a nice fresh looking squid

RES: They're not going to bite on anything _?

I: Yea, you got to throw it over and just you're not making enough money to make it worth while.

RES: Have the locations where you've fished changed over time?

I: Basically the same.

RES: How far a field did you go when you were pelagic long-lining?

I: Dog running, hell went to the Grand Banks for one; but basically right out here at the edge of Continental Shelf.

RES: Hudson Canyon?

I: There from the Canadian line down to Hatteras.

RES: So somewhere there on the shelf?

I: Yea.

RES: Ever go to George's?

I: Well up to the Canadian line, on George's and then you can't go over that.

RES: Then the outside of the banks as well?

I: Had it up to Grand Banks, make two trips up there and brought it back. Then we fished the winter before last, not this one, the last one, out of Puerto Rico. That wasn't

RES: Didn't like that, or it just wasn't profitable?

I: Wasn't profitable. Didn't get no money, same deal, same thing with the expenses down there. Lot of expense and got the same money for the fish.

RES: Did you go down there, or?

I: I flew down there, went the boat came in twice. Like I said you weren't making any money.

RES: Nice to be warm, that's about it.

I: Yea. Nice for them guys, but all the fish had to be flown back to the states at a dollar a pound or whatever the hell it cost.

RES: So you're loosing on that too.

I: Yea, just everything.

RES: How about the marketing and distribution of your fish - has that changed over time?

I: The only changes, this dock used to be like the other dock, all the dock did was pack your fish and then you shipped them to New York or wherever you wanted; but now the dock buys all the fish.

RES: Did you used to pay like they do like [] and you give the dock a nominal fee for packing

I: So many cents a pound and then the truck will come every night and tag them; for this buyer or that buyer; now the dock buys them.

RES: And it was your choice who bought?

I: Yea. Now the dock buys the fish.

RES: How do you find that?

I: I think I like it better because you unload your fish, they settle up and they give you a check and all the expenses taken out, the fuel you bought, the bait you got, the tax out, everything.

RES: And you get paid right away?

I: No, we don't get paid right away, that's the only down fall. We're supposed to get paid every two weeks.

RES: Kind of like a salary almost?

I: Well,

RES: Except it goes up and down

I: Well, I don't have to chase, I don't have to wait for it; I mean you come in with a trip of fish and you send to a bunch of different buyers, you got to wait until they send all your money; then you got to get all the bills from the dock, then you got to pay the dock. It just makes it easier I think. I ain't got to worry about the fish, I just throw them on the dock and I want to believe they're treating us fair.

RES: Generally, do people think they are?

I: I think they are. You talk to guys from the other docks, they'll tell you what they're getting for their fish and you don't know if they're bull shitting you or they want to make it sound like they're doing better than you are, which I think a lot of it is. Just in one ear and out the other. It's going to cost you a little; we get help packing out here, they don't have [] so you're paying for that, got a place to tie the boat up, you can use their equipment to move our stuff around in the dock, or change your fishery, get it on and off the boat; where down there they gotta pay for everything, so.

RES: Same thing, it comes out in the wash.

I: Yea.

RES: What do you see for this place in ten years?

I: It's done.

RES: This dock, this community, this fishery?

I: I think it'll still be here, I know this dock will still be here cause the family owns it; they own a bunch of boats. I don't know about the other docks.

RES: Is XXX in all this, or is he the manager?

I: He's married to the XXX. XXXX and XXXX. XXXX's one son has three full time scallop boats and the other son manages a couple of [] don't think they'd sell out. I don't know about the other docks. I see [] is for sale. But if they ever sold I don't know where we'd go to keep our boats cause every place you go is full.

RES: What do you see for the community as time, you see a lot of water front developments, people move away; what's going to happen with that?

I: Money keeps going up; people just want to see out. Like the other dock that's been for sale for years, the owners just aren't making any money.

RES: What do you think; I mean if all the fishermen move away and are living somewhere on the main land or somewhere else?

I: [] to tie your boat up and unload

RES: You think that will change the nature of the community, or?

I: Oh definitely, definitely.

RES: How?

I: Well the other dock there down there on Boulevard, everybody stored all the fishing gear; well the guy built a new house over there and tried to sell it. He couldn't sell it cause everybody was wanting a new house had to overlook what he said was junk. Well it's not junk, it's fishing equipment. And it seems like people want to move down here cause it's a quiet little fishing community but they want to run it all out. They want to see the boats sitting there not moving.

RES: Not firing up the diesels

I: Like one boat over here, was in the winter time, two o'clock in the morning, fires his engine up; here comes the cops swarming up. What's the matter? Well, the guy across the street complained about the noise. Well, no problem, I'll be out of here in ten minutes. But that's, the other dock they just put a bunch of [] across and I can see, they stink, the noise. Atlantic City down there where the clam boats unload I heard they can only unload between eight in the morning and seven at night. They used to unload

whenever they come in; cause of the noise though.

RES: What about the relationship with the recreational fishing industry?

I: I hope it gets better; but we're the bad guy.

RES: What do you mean?

I: Well, the reason there is no fish is that we caught them all.

RES: In their eyes you mean?

I: They go out there, chunking the tuna at night in the Canyons in the summer time and every Canyon will have a couple of hundred of boats in there.

RES: Just sitting, picking tuna

I: You should see it, looks like a city out there, and there will be just one long-liner out there and the reason we're not catching any fish is because of that long-liner.

RES: So you think it's a problem with perception?

I: Yea. I mean there's hundreds of boats, they all catch a couple of fish a night, there's a lot of fish being caught and there's one long-liner; if we catch 20 or 30 fish a day, we've had a good day. But we caught them all.

RES: What about with the environmental group?

I: They're getting bad too.

RES: Getting bad, is that a new thing?

I: Just getting worse.

RES: Why, or how I guess?

I: Everybody has got to eat. They're mowing the farms down left and right and putting up developments and now they're, you know they all eat seafood, well where do you think that seafood comes from? We've got to go catch them. They're worried about by the by-catch, which you should be, but you can't go from one extreme to the other. Oh my god you caught one seagull, well you can't go fishing no more. There's got to be a little bit of give and take.

RES: Do you think right now it's mostly give on the side of the commercial fishery?

I: Yea, we're trying. We're avoiding like the scallop drag; never used to see turtles out

here, now you're starting to see turtles on the scallop; we put chains on there to keep the turtles from getting in. That's not good enough. Now they think the dredge might be hitting the turtle under water and killing them, so we're not seeing them. [] in there had cameras on it, just to try and see the turtle hit the drag. It's just

RES: And did they see any turtles get hit?

I: No, they never seen nothing. They'll do a hundred observed trips and never see one turtle, the next trip they'll see one turtle; okay there was 50 scallop boats fishing today so we'll times that times 50, or whatever, however it works. But maybe the reason we're seeing more turtles is cause there's more turtles out there. The shrimp guys put the TEDs in there so they're not killing them anymore, they're getting thicker and thicker. But you can't, like the monk fish, they wanted the monk fish to be restored to historic levels; well, as soon as you start commercial fishing they're not historic levels anymore.

RES: How do you even know what historic levels are?

I: Yea, but you still got to, people got to eat. They say in like the majority of the world 80% of the protein people eat comes from the ocean, cause they're running out of land to raise cattle. So it's got to come from somewhere. I know the dragging can tear up the bottom a little bit, but you're going to have some of that. Like the farmers, I'm sure that plowing that field kills rabbits or whatever, but you still got to eat.

RES: So how does that, you said earlier that most of the regulations were all right if they're helping these

I: As far as the, not the enviro guys as far as the fishing regulations.

RES: Okay, what you're talking about there is more like the way you're portrayed in the press?

I: There was an article in the Asbury Park Press a couple of months ago, about the reason why the ocean water was dirty this summer; and one of the reasons was because of the commercial fishermen. Well, what do we got to do with it? What about all the run off from the street and everybody's yard, they're putting fertilizer on. Right away it was commercial guys; like we're the only people that have any affect on the ocean whatsoever.

RES: Do you think the ball is swinging back, or the pendulum is swinging back the other way?

I: I hope it does.

RES: Not yet?

I: This dock gets the tourists down here and tries to educate them on fishing and how

we're regulated

RES: The Lobster House down in Cape May kind of does that too.

I: I read a big article in National Fisherman [] about the tours; the tours were loaded with people. At least try to get them thinking in the right direction; that we're not out there raking the ocean and killing everything we see.

RES: How often do they run the tours?

I: In the summer time once a week.

RES: What do they do, do they bring tourists out on a boat?

I: No they set up a dock tour; like Jimmy Gutwowski and Carter Larson; they get them out front and explain to them, and got a bunch of fish out there and show them how, what they look like and how they're caught and explain to them how we're regulated and

RES: What the gear is

I: Yea

RES: How many people would you say do that?

I: They're crowded.

RES: A hundred at a time?

I: They only want to do fifty at a time but they're loaded with people, got to turn people away.

RES: That's a good idea I think to do that, the more people know

I: Display all the fish that they have on the dock; the tuna, the monk fish, the scallops.

RES: So they see it somewhere else than on a plate.

I: Yea, and understand how it got there.

RES: Do they meet you guys at all?

I: If we're unloading, yea, they'll talk to us. Then they got something here once a year and they have all the tourists come down and come out and walk around and look at the boats.

RES: Are people pretty positive, I mean it sounds like you are, are people pretty positive

about fishermen?

I: When you come out and meet them, they portray themselves as being positive, it seems like they are.

RES: Usually we end off, that's kind of the questions on the survey. But usually we end up by asking if there's anything else that you think we need to take in to account given the history of the fisheries and other points that you think, or stories, or observations about how things are changed; in particular about regulations. You know you talked about dog fish being the big one

I: I think the biggest problem is that they put a regulation into effect to make the fish come back; well the fish come back and by the time they get it in their science or whatever that the fish has made a come back well they're like years behind.

RES: You think there's not enough give back

I: Yea, its not done quick enough. You hear of stories about fisheries that they've made a come back – well, we don't see that in our science yet. By the time they get to it, it's been years or whatever. Like they don't have enough money to put the effort in to getting the science quick enough.

RES: What about the way things are managed, the council and the commission and the sort of structure they have for managing fisheries; do you think those are good or bad or they need help or?

I: I'm sure they could use help but I don't know what it would be.

RES: Are you involved much in fishers' management, or hands off a little bit more?

I: Not really. I'm not a good public speaker. My problem is I'll be talking to you now, and I'll be driving home and said well I should have told him that.

RES: Yea, I'm the same way. When I'm listening to these tapes I say crap, why didn't I ask him about something about whatever it was?

I: I'm not quick enough; some people are good at that, but I'm not.

RES: Well you guys, you have like XXXX and other industry reps that, do they do a pretty good job of representing the, on the whole?

I: Yea, I think so. But the problem is that we don't have the money to fight; like the Pew, whatever that is,

RES: Charitable Trust

I: Yea there's a lot of people with a lot of money that think the commercial fishermen should be put out of business; we don't have the money to fight them. They'll take you to court for every other little thing. Same with us fighting the sport guys; they're really in to sport fishermen.

RES: Is that more of a threat that you feel or has that actually resulted in regulations that hurt you?

I: Well both. What's a threat?

RES: The fact that he has all this money

I: Yea, it's a threat because I guess if they go in front of the judge and he says yea shut it down until we can rectify it, we're out of business and they've got all kinds of money to fight it and we don't.

RES: Has that happened yet, or do you see that as looming on the?

I: Well like the scalloping here, that was a big problem. They were sweating it for awhile and the judge through it out, the one issue but

RES: What was that?

I: I can't remember it now; I think it might have been with turtles. They want to shut it down until they get the science. We say well lets keep fishing; just ain't got the money or the time to fight them; we're all fishermen, most of them had a high school education, most we got; ain't go to college, not good public speakers and all that.

RES: Plus you got a full time job with the

I: Yea and it's not a salary either. You don't catch no fish you don't make no money. You still got bills to pay though. I think it's getting better. I got to believe it's getting better.

RES: What, the industry or the relationship with the

I: Everything. I think you got to get the general public to realize we're not the bad guys, we're not out there raping and pillaging and killing everything in the sea. You get a few bad guys; it's a bad example for everybody. There was a guy in town here started, we're at 400 pounds of scallops a day; well he boat this boat, no one will let him pack here, so he's got the boat moored out out there and his father has a house in High Harbor, so he put the scallops in his little outboard boat and run it around and then sell them. Well he was coming in with 1,000 pounds, 1,500 pounds. The Coast Guard boarded him, he had illegal fish on there, illegal Mexicans and they boarded me right after that, and I said well don't go by him out there he's a bad example. Like I was saying about the one boat's dragging here, like the first dragger here in years; he goes out and has a really good day

and that's all you hear about, but you don't hear about all the bad days he had, all you remember is the good days. Oh, he's doing really good, look how many fish he has.

RES: So who is the dragger here now?

I: XXXX's other boat.

RES: Yea, I knew that, I should have talk to him

I: Yea, like he was croaker fishing; oh, he had 9,000 pounds today; but he didn't catch nothing all last week. Meanwhile the gill net guys are coming in every day with 3 or 4,000 croakers. But it's like you remember all the bad guys, you don't remember all the good guys.

RES: Do you think there's any fisheries that are in bad shape or worse shape than when you started, or better? Croaker made me think of that because some people say there is more croaker now than there used to be.

I: Well they just, I think the water is getting warmer than it used to be, they're migrating further north. The tile fish is better now than when I started. There is more fish out there because of regulations I think. I can't say that about dog fishing. I think it's getting better; more scallops than when I started. These guys never caught the amount of scallops that they catch now; poundage wise, per trip.

RES: Any that have gone down? Well like I talk to guys that say there used to be cod out here, people say there is no cod any more.

I: There were cod here but I think that's cause global warming, the water is getting warmer. You're seeing different types of species of fish where you never saw them back then.

RES: What are some examples?

I: Like the croakers; they never saw any amount of croakers. I don't know how the monk fishing was years ago.

RES: Have you seen [] fish up here?

I: Off shore, off shore in the canyons you do.

RES: You never used to see those?

I: I don't, not as often maybe. You're seeing a lot of, like the striped bass are in the cove here for a month this fall where you never saw that before. Every day you look out there and

RES: See them

I: Where you never, 30 years ago you never saw that

RES: Do you ever go after stripers?

I: Not allowed; it's a game fish. There's plenty of stripers to be caught. I've got friends of mine that are sports fishing in the bay and they can't catch any stripers; well I said I'll take you out here and set a net right outside the surf and you'll sink it, you'll be amazed about how many striped bass there are; but they don't think there is any because they're not biting. One guy I knew, the guy I used to gill net with, he fishes across the bay; so he sees across the bay and he goes out and two hours, three hours later, he sees the same guy coming in with a boat load of fish; he had to have stripers on there. I said, what do you mean? That's the only thing you can catch out there. I said, well he didn't have stripers on, he's not going to risk a couple of thousand dollars worth of stripers for a fifty thousand dollar fine, that's not worth it. Oh, he had to have stripers. That was just his attitude. We're not catching any because that gill net boat caught all of them. Maybe they're just not biting.

RES: Maybe they just don't know how to catch them.

I: Fair-weather, the commercial guy is the bad guy. My brother runs a tug boat down in the Gulf and the one guy, they were having a gill net ban, I guess they finally did ban gill nets in state waters; I don't know what states or not. I'm going to go to that rally. Why? Why because you banned gill nets. Why? I don't know cause I just think they should cause everybody else thinks they should. What he thought was a gill net – he was looking at a shrimp boat, a dragger. Right away, the commercial guy is a bad guy.

RES: Where do you think that comes from? Is that some enviro logic or is that just?

I: Everything, sports fishing; we're not catching enough because of commercial guys and maybe the enviros, we're destroying the ocean. I don't know.

RES: Anything else you want to add before I?

I: No, nothing. I'll think of something when I'm driving home.

RES: Well, me too, usually I ask if it would be all right to call you, in case I missed something?

I: Sure.